

SC Pandemic Influenza Ethics Steering Committee (by Conference Call)

December 17, 2008

Attending:

Dr. Robert Ball, Chairman
Dr. Jane Richter, Public Health Work Group, co-chair
Dr. Phil Schneider, Ethical Issues Work Group, co-chair
Dr. Rick Foster, Clinical Guidelines Work Group, co-chair
Dr. Tom Fabian, Clinical Guidelines Work Group, co-chair
Dr. Hal Gabel, Public Health Workgroup, co-chair
Dr. Walter Limehouse, Clinical Guidelines Work Group, co-chair
Dr. Stuart Sprague, Ethical Issues Work Group, co-chair
Jim Beasley, Public Information Work Group, co-chair
Dr. Robert Sade
Judith Thompson
Dr. Linda Bell
Dr. Jerry Gibson
Dr. Max Learner, staff
Phyllis Beasley, staff
Stewart Carter, staff

The minutes from the October Steering Committee were approved with no changes.

Timeline:

January 21, 2009 is set at the SCHA for the next meeting of the Task Force. Initial draft documents are expected from each work group by that date.

Jim Beasley said that his group cannot produce anything until the rest of the groups have developed draft documents---the public information group needs draft documents to know what talking points to develop or what answers will need to be presented to the public. Dr. Ball asked if the group could be identifying key media and audiences in advance. Jim Beasley said that it is too early to get the media involved, but they could begin targeting groups to bring other key players into these discussions.

Dr. Sprague agreed that his group will begin writing the ethical discussion points to be included in the white paper. This will be the "preamble" for the white paper. They will reduce the ethics guidelines to four or five categories for the other groups to measure their proposed drafts against. They have been reviewing the ethical guidance information that has been published in other documents. He said that their draft will be completed prior to the January 21 meeting.

Dr. Ball asked how much pandemic influenza background (Pan Flu 101) information should be included. The group agreed through general consensus that there should be a "little

background, but not a lot”, around one to two pages. Dr. Ball said that much of the information can be obtained from the legislative Pandemic Influenza Progress Report developed by Dr. Learner.

Dr. Limehouse said that there should be mention in the white paper that the groups recommendations are “moving targets”, i.e., the recommendations about prophylactic use of antivirals may change as more is known about the disease.

The Writing Process:

Conclusions:

- Work groups will meet first on January 21, prior to the larger Task force
- All work groups will prepare their respective segments of the white paper based on the framework that was developed for the public health work group (see attached). This framework is based on the original framework developed at the first Steering Committee meeting.
- Title of the white paper will be “SC Prepares for Pandemic Influenza: An Ethical Perspective.”
- Each work group is responsible for identifying key issues and following the framework for each issue, addressing the six key bullet points.

Dr. Foster expressed concern about which issues should be included in the paper. Dr. Ball stated that work coming out of the work groups will be reviewed by all, especially the Ethics Work Group.

Public Health Practices Work Group Report:

Dr. Gabel asked for the finalization of the ethical principles that should be addressed by the January 12 due date of the Public Health Practices draft sections. Dr. Ball commented that part of Dr. Limehouse’s presentation in October included four bullets of ethical considerations.

Dr. Sprague said more discussion is needed of the calculations of benefits versus burdens.

Dr. Richter expressed concern that the rest of the group is not as familiar with the guiding ethical principles.

Dr. Sprague agreed that ethical principles should be “massaged”, but he will not be in attendance on January 21. He will provide revisions in writing by January 9th.

Dr. Learner suggested that the experts in each work group prepare their sections, then the ethicists will review all the pieces.

Dr. Schneider said that as each group is writing its section, the writers should just think of “fairness” in formulating recommendations.

Other:

- All work group leaders and writers will receive a copy of Dr. Sprague’s ethical text.
- All draft documents will be dated.

Legal Work Group Report:

In the absence of a representative from the Legal Work Group, Ms. Beasley read the group’s report (see attached). There was some discussion about whether recommendations of the Task Force will need legislative or regulatory approval. This was discussion; no action or recommendations at this time. Mr. Beasley commented that the potential for legal/regulatory actions emphasizes the need for public input and awareness.

Task Force Meeting Structure/Notes:

- 1 ½ hour for full Task Force
- 30-minute working lunch for work groups (while eating lunch, decide what time to reconvene)
- Goal of each group session is to share major issues and get feedback from Legal and Public Risk Communication Work Groups. The Ethical Principles Work Group will present their summary immediately after lunch.
- There will be a meeting of the full Task Force in early May. Date/location to be announced.

Action Items:

- January 21, 2009 is set at the SCHA for the next meeting of the Task Force. Initial draft documents are expected from each work group by that date.
- Public Risk Communication Work Group will begin targeting groups to bring other key players into these discussions.
- Ethical Practices Work Group will begin writing the ethical discussion points to be included in the white paper. They will reduce the ethics guidelines to four or five categories for the other groups to measure their proposed drafts against. Draft will be completed by January 9.